14: Huffman M-5 (no date) 1931
FJ22 Nuer FJ22

252 tray. The dura can be pounded as fine as flour, but that involves much physical labour. The woman frequently chants a song as she pounds.

415 The household furnishings vary in number, but in most of the average homes the following articles which are considered necessary (Fig. 4) by the Nuer are to be found.

A large earthen vessel for carrying water.

An earthen cooking-pot.

A long-necked gourd having a small hole in the end of the neck. This is used as a milk-pail; milk may also be churned in it by taking hold of the neck and shaking the gourd vigorously to and fro.

Several half-gourds of various sizes which are used as dishes for food; the smaller ones may be used as drinking cups.

A number of mussel shells for use as spoons. Spoons are also made of the horn of the antelope.

A clay pipe with a long stem—this is much in evidence.

A large earthen container for dura (kaffir corn).

Network bags made out of grass rope. These are used to hold gourds of various sizes.

A large basket, woven in openwork pattern, to hold various possessions when travelling.

411 A spear and a fishing spear.

A big-headed club, and also smaller clubs.

513 A ring made of cane-leaves is used as a pillow by the women. The pillow for men is made out of a piece of a tree and has three legs. Part of a tree is chosen where the branches fork in the desired direction.

854 A baby basket woven of a certain pliable kind of wood, and also a grass mat to cover it with.

352 Skins of sheep are used as rugs to sit on, and the skin of the waterbuck makes an ideal bed.

354 A fire, with earthen shield to protect it from the wind,

occupies a place in the enclosure. Cane-stalks are generally 354
used for fuel, although the women may go to the forest
and bring wood.

The skin of a reed-buck is not usually seen in the Nuer 753
home. A Nuer woman whose first child is a girl will not
sit on the skin of the reed-buck as she believes sores will
break out on her body if she does so. So the skin of the
reed-buck is not as popular as it might be if there were no
superstition attached to it. I gave a woman guest the
skin of a reed-buck to sit on one day—thinking that I was
honouring her, for it certainly was pretty—and was
amazed at the way she suddenly sprang to her feet and
got off the skin, explaining her actions by saying that her
first child was a girl.

A visitor—if a stranger in Nuerland—is appalled by 181
the paucity of the possessions in a Nuer family. What they
have seems, even at its best, such a meagre portion of the
things we think necessary for this life. Yet the wants of
the Nuer are few. He wants food, a place to sleep in,
cattle, at least one wife and as many more as he can
possibly afford, and children. He wants also a good spear
and club. These desires of his heart he wants to have
supplied with the least possible effort on his own part.

THE WOMAN'S DAY

The day begins early for the mother. Soon after day- 512
break she must take her large earthen jar and go to the 182
river for water. She has a head-pad made of cane-leaves,
with a hole in the middle of it—indeed, it resembles a
huge doughnut. She puts this head-pad on her head and
then puts the large earthen jar on top of it. She carries
herself erect, occasionally putting one hand up to steady
the jar. But usually she lets one hand hang down while in
the other she carries her long-stemmed pipe, smoking as [276]
she goes.